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What Causes War?

discussed by

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BRUCE BLIVEN

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What Causes War?

MR. JAMES G. McDONALD, Chairman

We make no apology for the choice of the subject today—What Causes War? Some of you who are incorrigibly optimistic may say that we are discussing an academic question, that the last war was the last war, and that war to end war having been won, it is of no use now to talk about what causes wars, because there aren't going to be any more.

I wish that I felt as optimistic as that. On the contrary I think there is today throughout the world a graver feeling of uneasiness about the future than at any time since the Armistice, and therefore it does seem appropriate to discuss what causes war.

The first speaker is an old friend of the F. P. A., a member of our Board of Directors, the President and Editor-in-Chief of *The New Republic*, whom I am glad to welcome and present to you. Mr. Bliven!

MR. BRUCE BLIVEN

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: If you want to realize one of the things which cause war, I suggest to you that you contemplate your own frame of mind at this moment. I haven't any doubt that nearly everyone here is hoping strongly that Sir Norman and I will indulge in a knock-down and drag-out fight this afternoon. You would be delighted if I bit Sir Norman's ear off and he threw me on my head over the table.

Belligerency is, in other words, a normal attribute of the human mind. We all love a good fight. But whether or not it follows that it is worth while for us to run the risk of destroying our civilization in order to satisfy our desire for belligerency is quite another thing.

As a matter of fact, you won't find, I think, very much of a fight between Sir Norman and me this afternoon. I suspect that when men differ the differences are usually over definitions rather than over the facts which follow those definitions, and that if you can only persuade people to agree on definitions, you find them agreeing on subsequent matters fairly well.

At any rate, I should be very reluctant to feel I differed strongly from Sir Norman on this subject. I feel a certain timidity about speaking with

him on the same program. He has devoted twenty-five years very largely to the study of this subject, and is a world-wide authority in regard to it. My secretary tells me that she made an inquiry the other day, and since the war I have written 5,800 editorials on practically 5,800 different subjects, so Sir Norman has an advantage over me in regard to singleness of effort, if nothing else.

On the other hand, there are so many aspects to the subject of war that possibly having written 5,800 editorials, I may have explored some more remote fields in connection with the matter which may prove fairly useful.

As I see it, there is no one cause of war, and anyone who attempts to say there is, is just as foolish as the man who attempts to ascribe one single cause for any other phenomenon. There are various types of things which tend toward the creation of a warlike spirit and increase the risk that that spirit will result in open hostilities.

A gentleman named T. A. Turner has made a list of forty-one causes of war. A religious organization which was investigating this subject recently made a list of causes which included economic causes, industrial, racial and political ones, and the press and propaganda. Sir Arthur Salter, you perhaps recall, made a list of causes which included religious, dynastic, political and economic, and, as Sir Arthur pointed out, sometimes several of these at once.

It is clear that the first two of these, the religious and the dynastic causes of war, are much less important than they were in the past. It is my thesis this afternoon that the most important cause or the most important group of causes of war is economic in character, and that among those which are of the most importance, are those due to the activities of private capitalistic enterprise, particularly in the international field.

Don't misunderstand me. I am not attempting to say that capitalists profit from war. I don't think they do as a general rule. I think the average capitalist enterprise is rather injured than aided, in the average war. I am not saying, either, that capitalists want war. I am sure that there are very few individual capitalists foolish enough to want war.

My thesis is that the activities of private capitalism, particularly in the international field, are of a character which insensibly and without anybody's wanting it particularly, drives the nations into dangerous conditions of tension toward one another. The result is a position where at almost any time you may have a flare-up of war because of these forces which have pressed in that direction without, as I say, anybody's knowing particularly they were doing so, without anybody's consciously willing it. You have the blind drift of a situation due to circumstances which, as far as they are consciously willed, are intended to lead to something quite different.

Probably the best way to see how this works out is to take a little list of some of the things which move toward war which are a result of the development of international capitalism, and consider them very briefly one by one.

I think one of the fertile causes for war is the endeavor of the business men of various countries to control foreign markets for themselves. We all know that prior to 1914, Great Britain and Germany were competing in the markets of the world, as for that matter all the great Western Powers were competing and are competing today. However, it is perfectly clear, I think, to everyone that the markets of the world are not large enough to satisfy the capitalists of all countries. In the first place, capitalism is insatiable, while these markets are limited in their size and scope, and in the second place, these markets are actually declining at a rapid rate, due to the rise of capitalist enterprise and industrial operation in those parts of the world which were formerly thought of as backward.

Then, again, there is an important cause of international struggle in the endeavor to control sources of raw materials, particularly in the tropics. To some extent this struggle is directly due to the operation of governments themselves. For instance, they are directly concerned for the control of an adequate supply of fuel oil. But it is also in very large degree the result of the operation of private capitalism seeking a profit in the control of these raw materials for the use of one country or another.

You have colonial rivalry, not perhaps on such a great scale now as a few years ago, but still an important scale, and colonial rivalry, of course, is linked up with both the things I have just mentioned. It operates both to facilitate control of foreign markets and to facilitate control of foreign sources of raw materials.

Then you have a very fertile source of war psychology in the matter of population pressure and emigration from one country to another. Many countries have argued at various times that the pressure of population inside those countries has demanded an aggressive foreign policy on their part, and this aggressive foreign policy has again helped to build up the difficulties which eventually lead to war.

This has been true of Italy in regard to North Africa in recent years; it has been true particularly, of course, of Japan in regard to Manchuria. These and other countries have argued that it was necessary for them to have foreign colonies or the unrestricted right of emigration in order to relieve population pressure at home, although I believe the population experts are unanimous in saying that such pressure has never yet been relieved by emigration. No country has ever yet reduced its size of population by sending emigrants abroad, for the simple reason that it is abso-

lutely impossible to send a sufficient number to have any effect upon the normal increase of population in a great country.

This matter of population pressure and the conflict which rises because of emigration, seems to me to be very largely economic in its character. In the first place, the pressure of industrial organization, of industrial society in the country from which the immigrants come, is usually due to the operation of private capitalism in that country. In other words, it is private capitalism and the state of society it brings about which make emigration seem attractive to the individual. In the second place, the actual fact of emigration, the movement of populations across frontiers, is usually accompanied, facilitated and encouraged by capitalist enterprise. Land speculators and other people who will profit from moving large numbers of population from one place to another, are likely to encourage that emigration, and in doing so encourage activities which are likely to lead to war.

Then there is the matter of the creation of tariffs and the international ill-will they make. I hardly need do more than mention that to you because you are all familiar with the sort of situation they bring about. Tariffs are, of course, a collective attempt on the part of a group of capitalists to secure for themselves special advantages in their domestic market, and therefore tariffs come very directly under the head of these economic causes of ill-will which help to bring about war.

One other important point in this connection is the matter of foreign loans. Capital is exported from one country to another and very frequently in the recent past it has been exported under terms which brought about a considerable menace to the peace and security of these countries. Not only is there sometimes competition between two great capitalist nations for control of the export of capital to some other supposedly backward nation, but also, as all of us are aware, far too often the bankers who export their money abroad demand that the security of their loans shall be backed up by the soldiers and sailors of their own government.

In other words, if the American bankers make a bad loan in, let us say, Central America and there seems danger of default, they demand that American marines and soldiers and sailors shall go down and if necessary lay down their lives in the course of the attempt to maintain the security of that loan. I do not need to point out to you that that is a very direct and simple form of international economic activity leading to war.

I probably haven't made myself as clear as I should like in saying that I don't think these things lead directly and immediately to war. It isn't a simple matter of action and reaction or a process of putting two chemicals together and getting an automatic result. What these things do is to create within any one country engaged in activities of this sort, a self-interest on the part of large numbers of people in a belligerent attitude on

the part of that country. I think there is a direct and close relationship between the activities of capitalists of this sort and aggressive chauvinism, aggressive nationalism, the super-patriotic atmosphere which says our country must be first above all others. It is not confined to any one of the major capitalist powers of the world. It exists in all of them and if I am right in my hypothesis, it exists in all of them more or less on the same terms and for the same reasons.

If I am right in what I say, it is folly for any one country or any group of countries at the present time to attempt internationally organized activity on a strictly moral or emotional basis to prevent acts of war by any other country or group of countries. Specifically, I think it is very unlikely that the League of Nations will take effective action to halt such a country as Japan in such an adventure as that of Manchuria, just for the reason that Japan in Manchuria is doing, after all, things which, when done in an orderly and legal method and not with the use of bayonets and shot, are approved of, are condoned by the prevailing public opinion in these other countries. You cannot build a sufficient distinction between countries on the mere basis of the use of force to justify coercive activities.

Specifically, I don't think there is any prospect at all of the use of a boycott against Japan by the other nations of the world. I have been struck to see how everyone was talking four or five months ago about such a boycott and how you no longer hear anything of it. I am optimistic enough to believe that perhaps the reason is that people now realize there isn't a nation in the world which is fit to come into court with clean hands and indict Japan, except for the one matter of the use of force instead of legal and orderly means, the use of shot and shell instead of diplomacy and contracts and treaties and legal agreements.

Therefore, I think there is no hope whatever of the use of coercion against an aggressor, and I think it is right and wise that this should be the case until the nations of the world are really prepared to come into court with clean hands and ready to say that the activities which bring about war must be stopped by all countries if we are to have any likelihood at all of eliminating war.

This interests me particularly in its relation to the pacifist movement in the United States and other countries. It seems to me a rather striking thought that we have never in the history of the world had so much pacifism as we have had in the last fourteen years since the conclusion of the War. Never have so many people said so much from so many platforms about the horror and the folly and the stupidity of war as they have said in these past fourteen years. Never before have so many people pledged themselves that they would never under any circumstances take the life of a fellow human being, and yet, in spite of this fact, all of us know that the world today is closer to war than it has been at any time since the con-

clusion of the so-called Great War. (I have yet to find out what was great about it.)

Every commentator is aware that today there are danger spots in the world where there is the greatest menace of war. There is actually a fairly good-sized, healthy war going on in South America in the Gran Chaco. There is a tremendously dangerous situation in Manchuria. There is a serious situation in Western Europe between Germany and Poland. The whole world is full of danger spots of this sort.

I think it is fair to say that this situation, coming as the culmination of fourteen years of pacifist activity, indicates a failure of pacifism as we have known it up until now. The pacifists have made no headway whatever. Of course, you might say that if it had not been for the pacifist movement, we would have had more wars and had them sooner. But there is no evidence in support of that point of view. There is no evidence which would satisfy a historian, that the entire pacifist movement of the entire world has prevented a single war, or postponed a single war by as much as a single day.

I think the primary reason for that is that the pacifists have failed to face squarely the facts about these international rivalries and their fundamental conditions. The pacifists have contented themselves with a moral and sentimental and emotional appeal against war, which is not good enough, which won't work, which will never result in anything important until it is based upon a facing of the facts. The pacifists have a marvelous facility for closing their eyes to disagreeable facts, just like all the rest of us. One of the most wonderful things about mankind is our ability to overlook the inconvenient, and the pacifist movement has overlooked this inconvenient fact of the relationship between capitalistic enterprise and war just because so many of the pacifists are themselves beneficiaries of capitalism and know they would be cutting the ground from under their own feet in a very strict and personal and highly disagreeable sense if they did indulge in this sort of activity.

What the pacifists must do if they want their movement to be effective, if they do not want it to be a completely sterile and aborted thing in a world which is on the verge of bursting into flames, is to face these facts, to go to the root of the causes of war, no matter how drastically deep they have to cut to get to that root, and they must then lay their plans on a basis of the truth about the causes of war, no matter how disagreeable they may find it for themselves.

THE CHAIRMAN: The second speaker in today's discussion on "What Causes War?" is, I think, the foremost authority in the world, without exception, on the general problem of international relations. Norman

Angell saw this problem in its reality before most of us knew that there was a problem. Norman Angell before the World War, in his great book "The Great Illusion," showed the futility of war, the senselessness of war, and the years since the Great War have been a startling vindication of his essential thesis.

That book of his in the years just before the War was an educational influence unparalleled throughout the world. During the World War he ploughed a lonely furrow. Since the war he has continued his efforts to make men and women understand the elements of this problem.

His latest book, "The Unseen Assassins," puts the case in modern terminology and from the point of view of today. To those of you who feel in need of informing yourselves concerning the usually overlooked elements in this problem, I recommend most highly "The Unseen Assassins."

Norman Angell to many of us has been more than a writer, more than a fearless student of this problem. He has been a friend and a counsellor for a generation. Throughout the United States and in many other sections of the world there are hundreds of men and women who have been directly influenced by his personal advice and help.

So it is with real feeling of old friendship that I now have the pleasure of presenting to you Sir Norman Angell.

SIR NORMAN ANGELL

MR. MCDONALD, MR. BRUCE BLIVEN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: I think I can best put my difference with Mr. Bliven, such as it is, by an illustration. Suppose that during the efforts of your forefathers to make of the Thirteen Colonies one state, there had arisen obstacles such that instead of one nation there had finally grown up, as in the case of the Spanish-American colonies, several nations, and that you had here in the Hudson Valley a Dutch state, and in New England an English state, and further South in Louisiana perhaps a French state, and elsewhere a Spanish state. Now, if there had happened north of the Mexican border what actually did happen south of it; and you had had in what is now the United States several different independent nations, those nations would of course have fought; indubitably so if the history of the world means anything whatsoever, just as Chile and Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Argentina, and other nations of Spanish America have fought.

What would have been the cause of those wars? The forces behind capitalism? But you have capitalism in the Hudson Valley and in New England now, just as powerful as it is in the existing Spanish-American

nations which *do* go to war with one another. Plainly, since you have capitalism now in this territory where there is no war, the wars which would have taken place could not be ascribed to capitalism. What is the factor that would then exist which does not now exist? That factor is political independence. The cause of those wars would have been the sovereignty, independence of each state, anarchy; the attempt of national persons to live in a closely packed world without the institutions of government; the attempt, that is, of nations necessarily perpetually in contact as the world grows a smaller place, to travel the highways without any rules of the road.

Put the case conversely: Suppose in Europe at the fall of the Western Empire there had been perpetuated a central authority, that, shall we say, of the Church; that the Holy Roman Empire had been a political fact instead of being rather just a shadow, so that you had had the thirty-odd states of Europe today united by some federal bond. Suppose, in other words, that history had done for Europe what it has done for the United States and there had existed between those thirty states of Europe some such bond as that which exists between the forty-eight states of America.

Those European states would not have gone to war any more than Pennsylvania fights with Ohio. But again, would the preservation of peace between them have been due to the abolition of capitalism? But you have capitalism in the forty-eight states. If you had had peace over Europe as you have had peace between the forty-eight states of North America, it would not have been due to the abolition of capitalism. It would have been due to the presence of a federal bond enabling those national persons to travel the highways of the world safely because there were on those highways some sort of rule.

And I say, therefore, that the fundamental cause of war—you cannot call it one cause, it is true, because other causes operate to make that one cause effective, but the really fundamental cause is, I believe, international anarchy; a belief that these national persons, these corporate bodies, can live together without any social rule or bond, each being his own judge of his own cause in any difference with another, and each his own defender.

This last is an important point which I shall touch upon in a moment.

It is just as impossible for anarchy to work effectively in the international field as it would be for anarchy to work within the state, for us to live at peace within the frontiers of the nation without the institutions of government, without law, without a Constitution, without courts—just as impossible for peace to be maintained between the nations traveling the highways of the world as it would be for accidents to be avoided on the modern motor car road if each drove as he saw fit, and be damned to traffic rules.

If on our modern roads each made his own rule, so that an Englishman accustomed to driving all his life to the left, coming to America, would say, "What! abandon the habits of a lifetime at the dictation of mere foreigners and now drive to the right? I shall continue to drive to the left"—it would be inconvenient.

And if we repudiated rules in that way, there would be accidents and, of course, the accidents would always be the fault of the other fellow. We might say we did not want accidents, did not believe in accidents. But accidents would happen. They would happen, not because men were particularly evil, not because one was worse than the other, but because that whole basic method of traveling the roads together without any real rules, was simply unworkable.

And that is a truth which becomes truer every day. The need for rules wasn't always so great. In the days of the oxcart it was possible perhaps to travel without any elaborate rules. If two teams met, one driving to the left and the other to the right, each, after the appropriate blasphemy, could disentangle his team and go on his way rejoicing. But if, on the modern motor car road, with the new Ford traveling at seventy miles an hour, you do not really know whether the other fellow is going to drive to the right or left; well, the discussion afterwards will probably be academic.

It is out of that situation also, this habit of regarding each nation as a unit, as sovereign and independent, that arises the sense of economic conflict, a sense which arises very often only for that reason.

Let me illustrate: During the discussion alike of the debts and of the St. Lawrence waterway, the suggestion has been made that Britain might settle certain debts by transferring Canada to the United States. I won't comment on certain curiosities of that suggestion, on the question, for instance, as to whether it is within the power of Britain to give you a title to Canada; whether, if it were, you would get anything; whether there would be in fact any transfer of property from one set of owners to another; whether you would become possessed of Canadian furniture, farms, houses, factories, false teeth or what you will, because, of course, you would not, and most of the assumptions underlying the suggestion are false assumptions.

But the fact to which I would call attention in this connection is this: During the election we were told that the entrance of Canadian wheat, Canadian produce and manufactures into this country was very damaging to the population of the present United States. Yet, if Canada were transferred, and the Provinces of Canada became States of the Union, you would get from Ontario, from Quebec, exactly the same produce from exactly the same farms, exactly the same manufactures from exactly the same factories, ore from exactly the same mines—all that produce would

pass freely into this country and nobody would have a word to say. But if the produce is damaging with one kind of flag flying in Ottawa, why does it cease to be damaging when a slightly different flag flies there?

In other words, Canada's competition is only competition when it happens to be that of a foreign state, a separate nation. You do not think of Pennsylvania as being in competition with New York or Ohio, but you do think of Ontario as being in competition with Michigan. You only so think because Canada is a separate nation. The sense of conflict arises out of the separateness and independence of the national bodies.

Now Mr. Bliven implies that if two states are thus independent and sovereign one is impelled by economic forces to go to war with the other. But how does military victory of one over the other affect the economic competition, even if it exists? What is the technique by which you use military victory after a war to take the defeated enemy's trade? How does military victory give you economic advantage?

Mr. Bliven talks of competition for the control of markets by war. But when you have had your war and are completely victorious, how do you control the markets? We have had our war with Germany. We won that war. We are apt to forget it, but we did. We British were completely victorious over our greatest economic rival, and we were promised a certain transfer of trade. Where is it? Where is this trade that somehow the victory, promoted we are told by the capitalists, was to give us? How does military power come into this matter at all?

Before the War we were told that the protection of our wealth, the protection, for instance, of our monetary gold, demanded a big navy; that but for the navy, foreigners would come in and take our gold and bust up our financial system. I have been rather interested to observe these last few years that foreigners *have* been coming in and taking the gold from the vaults of the Bank of England. What has the navy been doing about it? The navy seems to have been inactive. It is true that you also have lost wealth which the navy does not seem to protect. You have lent money to the foreigner and foreigners have run off with it. Why don't you send your navy after it?

What has victory, what has military power to do with these things? In so far as capitalism enters into these conflicts, it is because the capitalist thinks not as a capitalist, but as a nationalist. And it is rather suggestive that if the capitalist system goes to pieces, as I think it may, that much of the disintegration will have been due, not to the inherent defects of capitalism as such, at this stage at least, but to the chaos produced by nationalism. If the capitalist had thought more as a capitalist and less as a nationalist, we should probably not have had the War, and capitalism would not be in the desperate condition that it is.

I want to bring this matter home in such a way as perhaps to indicate where remedy lies. I do not want to imply that nations have no rival interests. They have. And war arises from the effort of each nation to find adequate defense for its rights and interests in a world of anarchy by the anarchic method: by each being his own defender of his own rights, basing his defense upon his own isolated strength.

About defense, the defense of the nation's rights and interests, you may take one of three attitudes: You may decide not to defend the nation's interests by military means at all, to be non-resistant. Personally, I do not think that will get universal approbation.

Or, you may say, "We will defend ourselves by our own strength."

Or, you may take the third line and say that the defense of the nation in this little world of ours shall be based upon the same principle by which we ensure the defense of the individual within the state; defense shall be the function of the whole community ensuring to each of its members the protection of certain rights, the right, for instance, to third-party impartial judgment in its dispute with others.

I want to examine and compare these last two methods—defense each by his own strength and by cooperation between the members of the community. (I will not spend time upon the first—no defense, non-resistance. Personally, I believe in it, but I have found after thirty years of discussion that not very many of my contemporaries can be brought to believe in it.)

So, I am leaving that and I come to the method of each defending himself by his own strength, which is the existing method, and the method which led to the War.

This general method which has always produced war and must always produce war was outlined by a British Cabinet Minister to a gathering of merchants in these terms. He said: "Gentlemen, there is just one way in which you may have peace and make your country secure. And that is to be so much stronger than your prospective enemy that he won't dare to attack you." He added: "This is a self-evident proposition."

This was just before the War, and being present, I could not forbear the interjection as to whether that was the advice he was giving Germany.

What does it really mean? Here are two nations or two groups of nations likely to quarrel. How shall both be secure and each keep the peace? Our statesman in the profundity of his wisdom says each will be secure and both will keep the peace when each is stronger than the other. Obviously, by that method there can be no general defense, because the defense of one means the depriving of the other of defense. The security of the one is the insecurity of the other.

The method of preponderance of power is perhaps a little discredited these days, and we have replaced preponderance by "parity." A great word—parity. We shall be saved by faith, hope and parity. I suggest to you that that is exactly as impossible as the other because you cannot equate the varying factors of power. During the argument about naval parity as between your country and mine, your people argued at one stage, "It is true we may have some bigger and better ships, but look at all your coaling stations." How many coaling stations go to how many ships? Nobody knows. Nobody ever will or can know.

During the discussion of the eight-inch gun cruiser as against the six-inch gun cruiser, it was shown that in clear weather the eight-inch gun cruiser had an advantage, but in foggy weather the six-inch gun cruiser had an advantage, so your people said in effect during the discussion, "Look here, your liability to fogs is a great strategic advantage to you." How much fog goes to how many cruisers?

The Germans plead that the French have too many forts along their frontier. The French retort, "Yes, but look at the marshes along your Eastern frontier." How much bog goes to how many forts?

We all know that industrial resources are a great factor of national power, particularly fats, consequently, hogs. So, to get at parity you have to equate fogs, bogs, and hogs. This means that you can always prove, and the expert will always be able to do it, that his nation is the only nation that has really disarmed, and that it is now the turn of the foreigner.

But, if you *could* get parity, it wouldn't get you anywhere. Suppose at long last Britain and America have said, "Now we are equal in naval power—," and then Britain goes and makes a new alliance on the morrow of this parity. If your security depended upon equality of power then you have security no longer. Whether you are defended depends on the force that is going to be brought against you. If you have two ships and your enemy has one, you are strong. If you have two hundred ships and he has three hundred, you are weak. You cannot indicate what is adequate defense until you know the power that you have to meet, and that depends on political considerations, upon such questions as, which nations are coming into the field against you? Are you going to meet one nation or half the world?

During this discussion about the guns, I happened to remark that I was really less interested in the calibre of the guns than in the direction in which finally they were going to shoot. And that is why the Admiral and the General can never tell us whether we are adequately defended or not, because whether we are adequately defended depends upon who is going to be with us and who against us. And that is a political problem, the problem of what the armaments are *for*.

You may say they are for defense. What is defense? Defense of your soil? That you are never going to fight until soldiers are landing on your soil? Have you noticed that that would condemn every foreign war that you have ever entered into? As an Englishman standing on foreign soil, I am prepared to argue until all is blue that every war we have ever entered was a defensive war. But I am obliged to note that the British Army seems to have gone into every country in the world. In fact, I think there is only one country in which it has not gone, and that ought to be marked with a star on the map—Greenland. However, there is one country where the British Army has never fought for about a thousand years—never fought against a foreign foe. That country is Britain.

Your history is strangely similar. You were not an independent state for more than about ten minutes before you were sending your navy into the Mediterranean to get at your enemy. And there later was Mexico; was it the defense of soil—a war which ended in the annexation of half of the then Mexican Republic? You nearly fought Maximillian. It would not have been over soil. It would have been over the Monroe Doctrine, and it would have come except, being at the end of the North and South War, Abraham Lincoln said to his Cabinet, "One war at a time, please, gentlemen."

You nearly fought us over the boundary of British Guiana. Do you know where it is? Spain—but the Spaniards were not invading New York. Germany—but the Germans were not threatening Pennsylvania; they were otherwise engaged at the moment.

Don't you see that defense means not merely the defense of your soil but the defense of your rights, your interests? When, therefore, you claim preponderance of power, as we all do, what it comes down to is this: We say, or the French or the Germans say, "It is perfectly true, we ask for more power than you, but we give you our most solemn assurance, we declare to high heaven that our armaments are for defense. That is to say, when we get into a quarrel about our rights, what are your rights and what are our rights, all we ask is that we shall be judge of that quarrel, and so much stronger than you that you will just have to accept our judgment without any question. Could anything be fairer? Do you accept?"

Don't you see that just as the old method defies arithmetic, so does it defy morals and ethics, that by the old method of isolated power if one is secure, the other is not, and that if one has what he calls justice, the other is deprived of it; that we are all the time asking the other to occupy a position which we refuse to occupy when he asks us?

Mankind has only found one way out of this: To take arms from the hands of the litigants and pass them over to the law. And the problem at

this stage is not as between a world of force and no force, coercion and no coercion. I am in favor of a world without coercion, but you, the public as a whole, are not. There remains therefore one of two alternatives: force behind the law, or force behind the litigants. I regard both as evil, but of the two I accept the less, and suggest that it is better that power, if you must have power, should be in the hands of the judge, than that it should be in the hands of the rival litigants. The problem which confronts us in Geneva is just that—to make this transfer of power from litigants to law.

It will be made, not, I think, by elaborate paper constitutions providing for an international army or anything of that sort. It will be made by an increasingly clear political and diplomatic situation. It will become, let us hope, clearer to the world, that such armaments as remain are for one purpose—at long last to stand behind some agreed international law of life, the first rule being that none shall be judge in his own cause, that all shall submit to third-party judgment.

I do not believe that it means an obligation to send your boys to fight in distant territories, because I believe that if the diplomatic situation is clear, if every state knows that in taking a certain line it will be deprived automatically of any hope of alliance with another state (and remember that the great wars are wars of alliances), if that is clear, no nation will in the long run persist in a course of action which isolates it diplomatically.

As to economic boycott which creates such fears, especially when mentioned in connection with Japan—it is already operating against Japan. Japan cannot borrow money; she cannot go into the capitals of the world and raise loans. The penalty is not formal; it does not need to be; it is not the result of aggressive announcements. But it operates.

Just one last word: We all want peace and we all follow policies that make war inevitable because we do not see the relation between the policy which we follow and the result in war. It is thus a problem of understanding, not of evil intent. War is not made by evil men believing themselves to be wrong. It is unfortunately made by good men, passionately convinced that they are right. And they are passionately convinced they are right because both parties alike are basing their whole method of international life upon the wrong fundamental assumption that each can be independent, sovereign, go its own way, whereas, of course, the independence and sovereignty of each in an organized society is a contradiction in terms.

You cannot have an organized society unless each is prepared to limit his independence at least sufficiently to make cooperation possible. So long as we do not realize that, emotion and good intention won't do. Again, it is a problem of understanding. We have to bring science now not

merely into the field of physics but into the field of human relationships; to apply to the understanding of those relationships the same cold intellectual rectitude that we have devoted to the understanding of matter.

We do not seem able to do that. As soon as we attempt to apply science to society we seem to be led astray by old pugnacities, hostilities. We always seek to find *who* caused the war instead of trying to find out *what* caused it. We want a scapegoat. We want to indulge pugnacities, the passions of retaliation. We do not believe that intelligence is necessary. We still in this matter—and here again I agree in the condemnation of much pacifist effort—believe it is a matter of better intentions. It is very much more a matter of better understanding. And we tend to disparage the need for understanding, for intelligence.

We English particularly have always had that feeling that understanding does not much matter; that our difficulties can be solved by what we call character. We think if a man's heart is stout, it doesn't matter how thick his head is.

I once heard at Geneva, in reply to a Frenchman, one of our Ministers repudiate the idea that logic mattered in these things. "Logic!" he said in reply to the Frenchman, "*We* are not guided by logic. We are guided by intuition, by empirical methods; by this and that. We muddle through."

A Frenchman turned to me in irritation and said, "Really, you know, I think you British believe your stupidity is a gift of God. Well, it may be, but it is a gift that ought not to be abused."

We must not abuse it, and in framing this new order, in creating now the international society which is necessary, we must try to understand as well as to feel. We must look upon the "brotherhood of man," not as a mere emotional aspiration, not as a mere windy phrase to be used as a peroration, but as something to be organized scientifically, a problem to be solved, and a problem which can only be solved by what I have called intellectual rectitude, a determination to face our own share in past failures. Let us give up the effort to find scapegoats, the habit of blaming either a guilty nation or a guilty class. Then only may we do for human society what we have done for matter, conquer it and manage it; reshape it to something that shall be more worthy of what I feel we can still hope shall prove to be "man's unconquerable mind."

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bliven has asked the privilege of a two or three-minute reply to Sir Norman. Mr. Bliven!

MR. BLIVEN: I think I won't need more than a couple of minutes. I told you at the beginning that Sir Norman and I would be largely in agreement, and I think his remarks have justified my contention. With

nearly everything he has said I have agreed, and I am sure this audience has as well. To a large degree, he was talking to people who are not collected here in this room.

I said that I thought if we could just agree upon a definition, the rest would follow, and I am sure that if Sir Norman would only agree with me to define sovereignty as the operation of private capitalism, and international anarchy as the operation of international capitalism, all would be well.

Sir Norman made quite a point of the fact that we have in the United States sovereignties—independent sovereignties—and yet they get along fairly well with each other and do not fight. I should just like to say parenthetically that he evidently does not know that we do now have in the United States some interstate tariffs. There actually are some Western States setting up tariffs against the import of goods from other states. If Sir Norman will give us a little time, we can perhaps show him the spectacle of a Kansas army marching into Nebraska in order to enforce a Nebraska market for Kansas vegetables.

Also, I should like to ask, if he thinks the states get on well together, whether he has never heard a Californian talk about the Florida climate, or vice versa.

Of course, seriously, the real point is that he is right in saying that if capitalism were completely internationalized, if it could be completely separated from the idea of nationalism and nationalistic aggrandizement, you would not have this tension, this fever, which is brought up in the world by the allied forces of capitalism and nationalism.

My point is simply that I feel capitalism lies behind the nationalism, that the interests of the capitalist are what produce the insistent, insidious, persuasive, automatic, almost unconscious propaganda, all the time, that our country is better than others and we have to enforce our superiority in some way on them with military strength.

He suggests that the important thing in the world is that we shall force the bandit to be disarmed and give the guns to the hands of the law. If he is there describing a Utopia, I agree with him that it is an admirable Utopia. I like it very much. If he is describing any condition which now exists in the world, I must say there is no bandit on one side and law on the other, that what you have at the present time is a group of bandits, some of whom are more conspicuously outrageous in their misbehavior than the others, and that the attempt to put guns into the hands of the law and take them away from the bandits, would simply result in putting guns in the hands of six or seven bandits and disarming one. This might make things more spectacular, but I don't know that they would be particularly more peaceful.

Finally, in just a word or two, let me say I can sum up my whole contention here if I ask you to consider two hypotheses. In the first place, can you imagine two countries which were genuinely socialized in character, two countries in which the final important aim of the goverment was the welfare of all the people in that country, on a basis of equality with special privilege for none—can you imagine two such countries going to war?

Well, yes, you can. Certainly you can think they might possibly get themselves into the position where they would go to war, but I submit that the possibility of such a thing is perhaps 5 to 95, that there are 95 chances of peace between two such countries as that, and 5 chances of war. Think, on the other hand, of the possibility of war between two countries where the interest of the private capitalist is all powerful, where he is allowed to go unchecked in his desire to range over the world, and invest his money where he can and get the biggest results for it, and if necessary, use the army and navy of his country to help him, where he is permitted to go unchecked in competition for the control of raw materials, of markets. What is the chance of war between two such countries as that? I won't say war, but what is the chance of hostility, of tension, of the dangerous international situation which would result in war? The chance of that sort of thing is 90 to 10.

If you will accept these two questions and my answers to them, then I think you have accepted my argument.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have received already a number of written questions from the audience in this room. I have also received a telegram from one member of the radio audience in Philadelphia. I congratulate the telegraph company on its splendid service. The telegram says:

PLEASE ASK MR. BLIVEN WHEN AND WHERE HAVE AMERICAN BANKERS EVER MADE A FOREIGN LOAN WHICH HAS DEFAULTED AND THEY THEN DEMANDED COLLECTION BY OUR ARMY OR NAVY STOP HAS THIS DEMAND BEEN MADE ON ANY PRESENT SOUTH AMERICAN OR OTHER DEFAULTED LOANS?

T. D. STARR.

Mr. Starr, we are asking Mr. Bliven to answer your question.

MR. BLIVEN: Even if I could not answer the question, the point would still be just as good, because what I was talking about was a tendency, a psychological condition on the part of our people, and not necessarily historical fact.

But I think I can answer the question. I submit to you that in regard to at least two Caribbean countries the question of loans made from the United States and American diplomatic and military interference are inextricably intermingled, and the two countries I will mention are Haiti and Nicaragua.

THE CHAIRMAN: I hope Mr. Starr is satisfied with that answer.

Here is a question addressed to Sir Norman Angell from the audience here. *To what extent has existing peace machinery succeeded in removing or minimizing the causes of national conflict?*

SIR NORMAN: I suppose the most outstanding example of existing peace machinery is the League of Nations. That League is fifteen years old. That is to say, it is a baby. It is an attempt to create an international constitution. It is not yet as old as the period which elapsed between your formal independence and the final achievement of your existing American constitution, and yet I think it has done a good deal. I feel that Mr. Bruce Bliven was not quite fair to the efforts behind that nascent constitution. It has at least created a new spirit, a new psychology in Europe, to which those of us who live in Europe, sometimes in very close contact with Ministers who know Geneva, can certainly testify. I do not hesitate for one moment to say that the effect of what we call there the Geneva atmosphere has changed very much the outlook of European statesmen. Take its effect on certain individuals. I will take just one at random: Lord Cecil, Conservative, the older type of statesman. He stands today with indubitable sincerity for sweeping disarmament, for an internationalist order in the world, for the League as expressing that order. Now that is something that you could not have imagined twenty-five years ago.

In the case of the Greco-Bulgarian conflict, I think it very likely that a Balkan war was actually prevented. There are other cases in which this baby organization has done undoubted service in establishing bridges which have helped in the preservation of peace.

Personally, I do not ask miracles. Fifteen years do not seem to me very long for an effort which is an attempt to correct an evil that goes back far beyond all written history. As against the momentum of two or twenty thousand years of war, we must not ask too much of fifteen years. The League is a baby that will grow. Its funeral has been again and again and again proclaimed; and somehow it persists in not dying. If it is to die, like Charles II it is an unconscionable time adoin' it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Here is a question addressed to Mr. Bliven from this audience here in this room: *Does Mr. Bliven believe that Socialism throughout the world would eliminate national conflicts, and if so, how?*

I give Mr. Bliven two, or at the most three minutes to reply to that simple question.

Mr. Bliven: Yes, I do, and most of my address this afternoon was devoted to giving you reasons for that belief. I will just supplement it by saying that there is such a thing as belligerence in humankind, but as far as I can see, it has about a thirty-minute limit. People get mad enough to want to fight, but usually work it off in about twenty minutes' time. The belligerence of the human animal has nothing to do with going out in armies and being in trenches and existing year in and year out under the horrible conditions of modern warfare.

A series of socialized states throughout the world would have eliminated all the causes of war which we have been talking about here this afternoon. They would have substituted in the minds of the people of the world devotion to the common good, not only inside your own country, but outside, among the common people of other countries, who, after all, are your brothers just as much as the people inside your own country are your brothers.

With the elimination of the tensions which, as I say, I believe are brought about mainly by the organization of our society, I think people would not go out and take guns and shoot each other. They would not be such darn fools. They would stay at home.

The Chairman: Now a question addressed to Sir Norman Angell. It is this: *I should like to ask Sir Norman whether the strength and persistence of the nation is not due primarily to the prevailing form of economic organization.*

Sir Norman: No. Here, I am afraid, is a point where I do differ from Mr. Bliven. May I say that I am a Socialist, that I have been a member of a Socialist organization for at least fifteen years, that I have been a Socialist member of Parliament. I am still a member of that Socialist organization, but I do not believe that the special economic organization of our time is responsibie for nationalism or for these national conflicts.

Take a case which will be in your minds at this moment—the debts and reparations. Both in Europe and in America those problems have created great bitterness and a sense of belligerency. In both cases the capitalists and the financiers have been on the side of the pacific policy, and in both cases public opinion has been on the side of the more belligerent policy; without any sort of doubt, whatever. Indeed, the main accusation of those who would exploit popular feeling is that the international bankers for their special interest are trying to get rid of these debts, this particular cause of quarrel.

Unfortunately for that thesis the financial experts, the economists, and Mr. Bliven himself are at one with the bankers in saying we ought to wipe these debts out. You have there an instance in which capitalism and finance, with all its evils and faults, is on the side of the international conception, and popular public opinion is against that conception.

Nationalism, in my view, has roots that far antedate capitalism. It is rooted, I won't say in the herd instinct because there may not be such a thing, but in that type of partisanship which we had in the case of the religious wars, wars which obviously had also very little to do with capitalist intrigue.

A certain tribal hostility is a fact in nature, human nature. The point is that what makes the tribe the social or national unit is a matter of education. We conceive of the tribe as one thing at one time, and another thing at another time; sometimes a racial grouping, sometimes religious, sometimes political. The fact that we should fight is perhaps part of our nature. But what we fight about is a matter of nurture. All that is true, but in thirty years of the study of this thing I have never had any evidence yet that the general tendencies of international finance and of capitalism were promoting nationalism.

If I had the time, I could give you definite evidence where again and again finance has stood on the whole for peace, and popular passion for war.

MR. CUMBERLAND: *Mr. Chairman, may I inquire of Sir Norman whether there is evidence that as capital is becoming more international in character and scope, the pressures and strains of nationalism are diminishing?*

SIR NORMAN: Before dealing with that specific point I would recall the distinction which I made in my speech: A man's interests may be capitalist and his passions nationalist. I do not take the view that the capitalist is always a sort of steel-brained person who never makes a mistake, never allows his passions to over-ride his judgment. I have known a good many capitalists and bankers in my time, but I fail to recognize that picture at all. The capitalist and the financier can be just as big a fool as anybody else, really he can; and just as nationalist. Often he thinks and acts as a nationalist and not as a financier or a capitalist.

I think you have today two currents or influences in the world—the current of nationalism, intensified by irritation, expressing itself in familiar old pugnacities; and you have the other current or influence of informed minorities who desire consciously to build up an international organization. The two are developing side by side; they often pull one against the other, and I simply do not know which is likely to dominate the other.

THE CHAIRMAN: A question addressed to Mr. Bliven—*Does Mr. Bliven recognize that the leaders in the pacifist movement are also leaders in Socialism and kindred movements for the reform or abolition of capitalism just because they face the facts—Americans such as those on the Board of The World Tomorrow?* Whether one editor may speak about another publication, we shall see. Mr. Bliven!

MR. BLIVEN: I judge that question is in fact a short speech, and I will simply add to it, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Where is the next question?

MAJOR-GENERAL YAKHONTOFF: *May I ask Sir Norman to explain how the calibre of guns is acting in befogging the main issue?* Some idealists who are Socialists, or such idealists who believe in the brotherhood of the nations and do not know the main point when Japan is allowed to do what she is doing—why do they forget it is not the capitalists, but profit-making by individuals?

The main point in the question is this: *Why is it that Skoda or Schneider-Creusot or Vickers or Hotchkiss or other well-known manufacturers of materials which are not for the welfare of nations, are so anxious to back Japan and not China, and why the League of Nations and its advocates do not see where is the reason?*

THE CHAIRMAN: As I understand it, the question was this: *Why is it that the munitions makers (the questioner named a number of the more distinguished of these firms) who presumably are not interested primarily in benefitting mankind—why is it that they support Japan rather than China, and rather than the League of Nations? In other words, the implication seems to be—isn't it true you have in the munitions makers positive capitalist forces making for war?*

SIR NORMAN: Assuredly you have, and if you had an epidemic of smallpox you would have interests benefitting by that epidemic—lymph makers, coffin makers, and heaven knows what—and, I dare say, promoting it. But that does not make smallpox a capitalist interest.

Of course you get special interests benefitting by war, but they make their power felt by appealing to certain fallacies in the popular mind. It is the only way in which they can make their influence felt. I say therefore that the practical thing to do is to disabuse the popular mind of those fallacies, to make clear to the public the *way* in which they are being exploited. So long as they are left in possession of those fallacies— nationalist, patriotic fallacies—the special interests will always find it easy to capture the public mind by appealing to prevailing illusions.

In the past the propaganda for war has been promoted by emphasizing such views as that a nation enriches itself by conquest or the addition of territory; or by possessing power greater than that of others; or needs such power to protect its wealth, to secure the nation's rights.

Such are the popular beliefs which those special interests exploit and by which they profit. The way out is to undermine such popular beliefs by bringing home to the public mind how fallacious and illusory are the doctrines that the armament makers propound.

THE CHAIRMAN: A question to Mr. Bliven. Mr. Bliven has suggested that the tension caused by the pressure upon markets by private capitalist organizations is one of the main causes of war. *How would Mr. Bliven differentiate the tension caused by the pressure of raw materials and manufactures of non-capitalist Russia upon world markets from the tension caused by the products of capitalist countries? In other words, is pressure from Moscow more benevolent than pressure from Pittsburgh?*

MR. BLIVEN: That is a difficult question to start thinking about when I am standing up here at this moment. The upset in the world markets caused by goods from Russia certainly is akin to the upset in the markets caused by the goods from any other country, but there is this difference, I think—that Russia has no intention of going to war in support of her claim for any given market anywhere, and capitalists, while they do not actually make that claim, are likely to get into a frame of mind which leads eventually to a condition of war as a result of their activities.

So I feel there is a very important difference, in the long run, between the conditions brought about by exports from Russia and conditions brought about by exports under private capitalist auspices from another country.

MR. COLT: *Sir Norman might extend, possibly, his former remarks and indicate if the growth of the Geneva atmosphere about which he spoke would not bring about the stoppage of private munitions companies.*

THE CHAIRMAN: The question that Mr. Colt implies is: *Should not or may not the League's development end private munitions-making?*

SIR NORMAN: As you are aware, there are a great number in the League who are actively promoting that method of attacking the armament problem—by demanding that the manufacture of arms be taken out of private hands. May I add this: In England, I happen to be a member of the Executive Committee of the League of Nations Union, which is the most considerable of the societies supporting the League in Europe.

From the beginning, we have stood for the policy of taking arms out of the hands of private manufacturers, and that policy has received the support of many, of men again, like Lord Cecil, Gilbert Murray, Lord Lytton, and a great many others of a conservative type of mind, who, I think, have been brought to that position by their association with an organization of that kind.

In brief, in reply, I would say that the whole influence of the League is to find a solution of that kind.

MR. FREDERIC HOWE: *I should like to have Sir Norman inform us effectually the extent to which France has used her gold hoard for the purpose of creating international arrangements which are at least related to war, and as he is the author of a book on money, what he would suggest as to the possible control of gold as an agency for peace.*

SIR NORMAN: As to the first part of the question, whenever you are dealing with motive, it is extremely difficult to be sure of facts at all, and I am simply going to sidestep that because I think the second part of the question is both more interesting and more important.

If we are ever to have a workable money system of any kind, whether it be based on gold or be based on a managed currency, that system must be an international system. It is mainly through the monetary system that the economy of the world becomes fundamentally international. We must either manage gold or manage without gold.

In either case we must manage, and we must manage internationally. The breakdown of the gold standard has been due to the international maldistribution of monetary gold, and that maldistribution has been brought about largely by fiscal policies, high tariffs, the insistence of each nation upon a favorable balance of trade, (as though it were possible for every nation to have a favorable balance of trade). The attempt to maintain a creditor position in company with a favorable balance of trade has smashed the gold standard over most of the world.

The same policy, if we persist in it, will smash any new standard we care to create. Whatever the money of the future be, it must be an internationally managed money; and I think that that management will be achieved largely through understandings between central banks. But, again, no understanding between central banks will work if you divorce the problem of tariffs from the problem of money. The effect, and usually the object of tariffs is to create "a favorable balance," which must be settled by a transfer of gold or other standard money. If this goes on, and is not corrected by foreign investment, then the money system is bound to become dislocated and will ultimately break down.

This does not mean that none of us shall be entitled to make tariffs. It does mean that in making our tariffs we should simply recognize, what is indeed a plain and undeniable fact, that our tariff concerns others, and that we should take that fact into account.

If when in Britain we make a tariff that ruins half a million Danish farmers we say that that is no concern of ours, then we are simply barbarians, and we do not know how to live in a civilized world. If the ruin of half a million farmers in a neighboring country is no concern of ours then we are proceeding on anarchistic assumptions which will finally smash any standard we set up; we shall bring our industrial system to naught; and we shall deserve to have it brought to naught because we have not recognized a very elementary truth about life in an interdependent world. Since what you do does concern others, you ought, in Christian decency, to consult those others about any action which vitally affects their interests. At one point at least we may unite decent Christian morals with the maintenance of a workable monetary system.

THE CHAIRMAN: I should like to ask Sir Norman this question, if I may: *The other evening in one of my regular broadcasts, I was talking about the English indebtedness to our government. I said that the English debt amounted to $4,000,000,000 at the beginning. England has already paid $2,000,000,000 of that $4,000,000,000, but under the terms of the debt-funding agreement which we have liked to think was generous, Britain still owes us over the period of the next fifty-five years, $11,000,000,000.*

I have been criticized for the use of those figures on the ground that I did not point out that this extra $9,000,000,000 which the British owe us over what they would have paid us if they had paid us at once, over the $4,000,000,000, was due to interest during the period of fifty-five years.

I wonder if Sir Norman would comment on that criticism.

SIR NORMAN: I think the significance of the statement is related to the point I just made about the workability of any monetary system, because, plainly, if that sum is to be paid in gold or in any other standard money, payment by that means will smash any monetary system that you care to establish. And while the problem of interest is relevant, it is important to see how it is related to the question of payment by goods. If you lend a person a farm, that farm produces every year crops, and you may take a share without ruining the farm. It goes on producing crops. But gold does not grow new crops of gold every year. It remains exactly the same in amount; and if you are going, by the operation of interest, to accumulate it, whether in this country or any other—if, in other words, you demand the payment of these debts other than in goods, again, you are going simply to smash your whole monetary system.

I think that Mr. McDonald's point was well taken in view of the fact that the accumulation of gold differs from the accumulation of property which is the reproduction of an original store.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is time for one more question.

QUESTION: *I should like to know from Sir Norman what interests oppose the complete disarmament advocated by Russia.*

THE CHAIRMAN: The question is addressed to Sir Norman. *What interests opposed the Russian proposal in the Disarmament Conference for complete and immediate disarmament?*

SIR NORMAN: This interest: that any government in the world (and that includes the American government) which stood for complete disarmament, would immediately be repudiated by its Chamber, its Legislature, its Parliament, its Congress. That interest, mainly, I think, stood against the Russian proposal.

May I add that I am one of those who have voted for the virtual abolition of the British Navy, so that as far as my personal conviction is concerned, my withers are unwrung.

But I think here we touch a point which is of importance to pacifists. There is a type of reformer who, feeling quite convinced that he knows the complete and certain cure of the world's troubles, offers it to his neighbors. But sometimes the neighbors are skeptical, are not quite so sure about it. Then the reformer is apt to retort, "Then I won't play any more."

How shall I put it? I think I see quite clearly that no great risk would be involved for a great nation in the complete abolition of its armaments. But I don't expect my neighbors, on this matter, to be as intelligent as I am. I don't expect their minds to move as quickly nor as far. I make allowance for that slowness. Even though they won't accept the completely radical solution I happen to believe in, I hardly feel justified in saying that I won't continue the conversation.

They reject my solution. Swallowing that rebuff, I then say, "All right; you won't go that far. How far will you go? What is the next best thing to do?"

And it is the "next best thing" that I think we pacifists have got to discuss.

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